

House Bill 284

March 22, 2007

Presented by Joe Maurier

Senate Fish and Game Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Joe Maurier, Administrator for the Parks Division of Montana's Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP).

Last spring I met with a member of the Little Shell Chippewa Tribe. We toured the Moroney Townsite that is a unit of Giant Springs State Park. The Little Shell Tribe proposed exploring the idea of managing the site for FWP. Specifically, they were interested in cultural and recreational activities and providing summer employment opportunities for younger tribal members serving as trail guides and cultural interpreters.

Among other reasons, having more on-site presence is very desirable from the Department's perspective. Last spring was an exceptionally bad time regarding vandalism at the site.

We have been in discussions with the Tribe since that first tour on potential terms and conditions. The primary condition discussed is that the Tribe would need to renovate the building up to acceptable standards, if they decided to use it and that they would need to find the funding to accomplish this task.

FWP supports the effort to negotiate with the Little Shell Tribe regarding this area.